



THE GUARDIAN

During the first week of December we received several snowfalls, culminating on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Sadly, the accumulation of one foot of snow did not last long. A warm air current off the Pacific Ocean referred to as the "Pineapple Express" melted all that snow in a matter of a few days! Oh well, there will be more snow in the weeks ahead.

Speaking of the Immaculate Conception, this year's feast was certainly a great day at the seminary, and not just because there were no classes. After Mass and renewal of our Total Consecration to Jesus through Mary, we had free time until our sodality ceremony began. A sodality is an organization that helps its members grow in their devotion to Our Blessed Mother and in the practice of virtue. Our seminary sodality is an important part of our spiritual program. Even though it is optional, all the seminarians have chosen to become members.

December 8th was also to have been the day of our first basketball game, but the game was postponed because of bad road conditions. We won't have many games this year, with such a small number of players, but we look forward to the competition.

We thank the Sisters from Mt. St. Michael for inviting us to attend their Christmas concert in Spokane. We all enjoyed the beautiful singing, which will help us to appreciate more the blessings of Our Lord's Birth.

Soon we will all be heading home for Christmas with our families. Christmas vacation is such a wonderful time of year. We hope that you will all have a

very enjoyable Christmas with many blessings of God in the New Year. Thank you for your prayers and support.

A time for Our Lord

by Gerard Odom, gr. 9

As many of you know, Christmas is fast approaching. During this time of year, our thoughts tend to revolve around Christ's Birth, Midnight Mass, presents, and so on. People spend so much time preparing for the holidays, that they never really stop and ponder what Christmas is really about.

Ask any kid six years old or younger and he'll say that Christmas is about presents or Santa Claus. Ask any non-Catholic adult, and he'll likely say that it's about getting together as a family and sharing the holidays. These are all nice things, but many people have lost the true meaning of Christmas.

When you think about it, you realize that there was no Christmas before Christ was born. Even after His Birth, it was not celebrated. If it was, there were certainly no presents or parties involved. There's nothing wrong with celebrating the holidays that way, but when these are the only reasons for a celebration, then there is something wrong.

Our Lord was born in the middle of the night in extreme poverty, so that we might be redeemed and enter Heaven. That is the most important fact about Christmas, and it is also the most forgotten. Instead of paying respect to Our Lord

January calendar

- 4 — Seminarians return
- 5 — Classes resume
- 6 — Epiphany Feastday (no homework)
- 13 — Gerard's birthday
- 18-20 — Semester Exams
- 21 — End of Second Quarter

at the manger scene, people are busy partying and celebrating — oblivious to the fact that they owe so much to Our Lord. Christmas is a day that should be remembered. There is nothing wrong with celebrating with a party, but there should also be time put aside to honor Christ for coming into the world and redeeming mankind.

This Christmas, be sure to celebrate the holidays in your own special way, but also be sure to celebrate them Our Lord's way as well.



Cavan and Gerard were received into the sodality on December 8, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

New recruits

by Peter Linder, gr. 12

Fr. Benedict started the Sodality of the Immaculate Heart of Mary during the second year of the minor seminary. The main purpose of the sodality is to give seminarians a means to increase in devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. On December 8th, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, two of the seminarians became members of the sodality and two others became professed members. (To become a professed member, one must be in the sodality for at least a year and observe the rules and practices faithfully during that period.)

The two new members each received the Miraculous Medal, which members wear visibly as part of our school uniform. The two who became professed members each received a large scapular (about 6 x 7 inches), which is normally worn beneath the shirt, but is worn visibly on feasts of Our Lady. We had all been looking forward to this day for quite some time, and now that we are all members of the sodality I think we will become closer friends. We know that we are all striving for the same goal — to become perfect Christians.

Many people, when they hear of a sodality, think it is something that is just for women and girls. This is a huge misconception. On December 5, 1584, Pope Gregory XIII in a papal bull officially declared the sodality to be a lawfully constituted society, but at that time it was for men only. It was not until 1751 that women were allowed to have sodalities. I am very thankful that there are sodalities for men and women, because it would be very sad if anyone were prohibited from receiving the wonderful graces that can be obtained from being a member of Our Lady's sodality.

Economics and morality

by Mr. Tim Duff

I often emphasize to the seminarians that there are basically two ways of viewing our neighbors. Either we love them as ourselves as Our Lord Jesus Christ commanded, or we seek to use them for our selfish benefit — the pagan mentality. In teaching economics and government I stress that, temporally speaking, perhaps the greatest benefit Christ gave the world was to largely deliver it from the slave labor mentality prevalent at the time as exemplified by the Roman Empire. We are also doing research projects on the rejection of Catholic principles of government and economics during the past few centuries, especially with the rise of Protestantism, Communism and Modernism.

If men are to live in peace and prosperity as Our Lord intended, we must deal justly with one another. The Communist slave labor system which took over Russia has caused untold misery. This was certainly prophesied by Our Lady of Fatima when she said that an evil scheme would come out of Russia to destroy the peace of the world. This scheme would seem to

indicate the acceptance of slave labor. This acceptance of slave labor can even be seen in our own country as trade with China expands and American markets are glutted with products produced, in many cases, by slave labor.

To emphasize the disastrous impact communism has on economics, I told the boys the following joke. (I'm probably not getting it right, but that's never stopped me before.)

As a German, a Frenchman, and a Russian were touring an art museum and admiring a painting of Adam and Eve, they began to argue the nationality of our first parents.

"Look at the neat rows of trees," said the German. "Definitely the work of an engineering mind — Adam and Even are German."

"No, no," chimed the Frenchman. "They are in love, they are out enjoying nature — certainly they are French."

"You're both wrong," added the Russian. "They are clearly Russian."

"Russian?" puzzled the other two.

"Of course. They have no clothes. They have no home. And the only apple they have they are sharing."

All joking aside, I think the seminarians understand that divorcing government and economics from morality is an invitation to disaster, and that they should, in their own lives, always deal with their neighbor justly and with that charity which is the "bond of perfection."

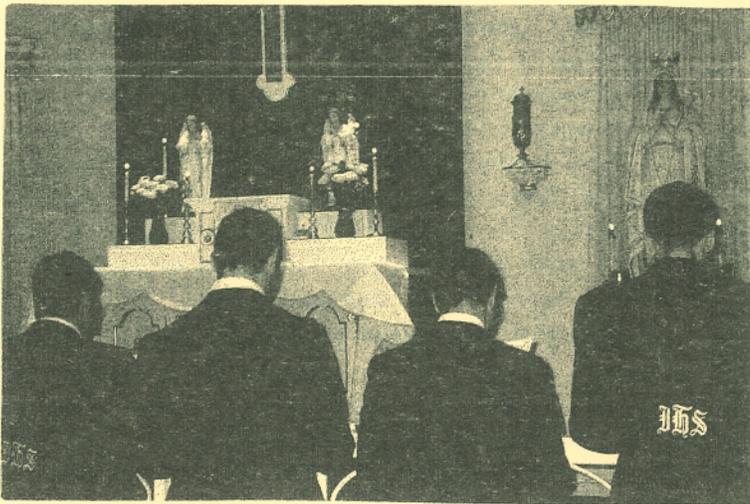
Fear or confidence?

by Cavan O'Sullivan, gr. 12

When the school year began, I learned that I was going to have Speech class. I dreaded it so much because I had never had a speech class, and the thought of having to speak in front of an audience made me want to run. I have since learned that it is a good class to take because it helps us to overcome our fear of speaking to an audience.

Our first speech was an informative speech. To research our topic we went to the library and looked through books, magazines, etc., with the help of the librarian. As we gathered our information, we put the facts onto note cards. Next we made an outline from the information on our note cards. After we finished the outline, we practiced our speech in class in front of only two people, and still we were nervous. We also tape-recorded ourselves so that we could recognize our mistakes. We even practiced alone in front of a mirror. All of this practice helped to give us a big boost of confidence.

On the big day we gave our speeches to the other seminarians and then to the junior high class. Peter's speech was on "Global Warming" and my speech was on "The Cost of Living for an 18-Year-Old." Our speeches went really well, and everyone enjoyed them. After the speeches we were happy because they were over with. That is, until the next time. Now we are starting to work on the next speech, which will be a persuasive speech.



Sodality members renew their Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.



Standing in front of the class to give a speech is not as easy as it looks.



Sr. Amada and Sr. Paulina, our seminary cooks, are very popular with the seminarians, who seem to be forever hungry.



At last there's enough snow for sledding!



With 100 forested acres at our back door, we didn't have to hike too far to find the perfect Christmas tree.



"Eureka! I found it."

Now you see it, now you don't!

by Brandon Odom, gr. 10

Here in Idaho at St. Joseph Seminary I am pleased to announce that it finally snowed. On November 30 we got two inches of awesome white powder. However, the next day it was gone and in its place was a bunch of dirty slush. Not much fun huh? If you think that was bad, you should hear what happened next!

On Thursday (December 2) the forecast said we would be getting a foot of snow over the weekend starting Friday night. Saturday afternoon came and it hadn't even rained! Sunday morning came, and it finally started to snow; but that was just another disappointment. It stopped after 30 minutes. Then out of nowhere, as if with one final, dramatic effort, it started snowing. It dumped. It heaped. It fell like crazy. It ended up snowing for six hours and we got about five inches. By the time it stopped we were out sledding and snowball-fighting and trying to get as much fun in as we could, because it was bound to melt soon. The first good snow always does. But to my surprise it didn't. In fact it snowed even more.

Three days passed. We built huge jumps and nearly killed ourselves going off them. We had snowball fights and did the same stuff we do every year. Pretty soon the last thing on our mind was rain. But rain was imminent. It's always lurking wherever people are enjoying snow, and it creeps up like a bad odor. It did the same to us. Just when we thought we had escaped, it hit us like a train. It rained for a whole day! It took our awesome white powder and gave us dirty slush in return. Sound familiar?

So here I sit writing this article while it rains outside. If anyone reads this article please pray for four feet of snow at St. Joseph Seminary!

Sons of Mary

Every priest, especially in these times, needs a strong and tender devotion to the Holy Mother of God. She who was the mother of the great High Priest also has a love and concern for the other-Christians who walk in the footsteps of her Son. If a young man desires to become a priest, he must cultivate a great devotion to Our Blessed Mother.

To help our seminarians in this endeavor we have in our seminary Our Lady's Sodality. This is most appropriate, for

it was in a seminary in Rome that the very first sodality was established in the 16th Century. Since then, sodalities have spread throughout the world, assisting the members to foster a true devotion to Our Blessed Mother.

Every sodality chooses a title of Our Blessed Mother and may also choose a secondary patron. Our sodality is named the *Immaculate Heart of Mary Sodality*, reminding us of Our Lady's words at Fatima: "My Son wishes to establish in the world devotion to my Immaculate Heart." Our secondary patron is that great model for Catholic youth, St. Dominic Savio.

It is my prayer that our sodality will help our seminarians develop a deep love for Our Blessed Mother. Young people need to call upon her, especially during the trials and temptations of adolescence. St. Bernard tells us: "Let him keep silent and refuse to magnify thy mercies, O Blessed Virgin, who has called upon thee in his necessities and found thee wanting! Sooner shall the heavens and the earth perish, than Mary refuse her assistance to him who earnestly calls upon her." May our seminarians all deserve to be called true sons of Mary, and may we all have that devotion to her that Our Lord wishes.

May Jesus and Mary grant to each of you many blessings during the Christmas season and throughout the New Year. We are most grateful for your continued support.

Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI



One of the last things we do before our Christmas break is to decorate the seminary.

The Guardian is published monthly for the enjoyment of our benefactors and for the family members of our seminarians. This newsletter is free upon request.

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